

Arctic Pedagogy: Indigenous People and the MACOS Culture War

by Susan Hegeman | Issue 10.2 (Fall 2021)

ABSTRACT This paper is about the place of Indigenous people in an early instance of a culture war in the United States: the conflict in the 1970s over an innovative middle-grades social studies curriculum called “Man: A Course of Study” (MACOS). Funded by the National Science Foundation, MACOS sought to revamp social studies education by addressing big questions about humans as a species and as social animals. It quickly came under fire from conservatives and helped to solidify the concept of “secular humanism” as a social threat. A broad conservative organizing effort, whose effects can still be felt today, eventually ended not only MACOS, but the very viability of school curriculum reform projects on the national level. Though this story is familiar to historians of American education, this paper argues for its centrality to the development of contemporary conservative politics and the early history of the culture wars. It also takes up the largely unaddressed issue of how Indigenous people figured in the MACOS curriculum and in the ensuing controversy. Focusing on the ethnographic film series featuring Netsilik Inuit that was at the heart of the MACOS curriculum, this paper addresses the largely unacknowledged legacy of Indigenous pedagogy, to argue that the culture war that led to the demise of the MACOS project also represented a lost opportunity for Indigenous knowledge and teaching to be incorporated into the formal schooling of American children.

KEYWORDS Indigenous peoples, representation, education, pedagogy, culture wars, MACOS, social studies, Inuit

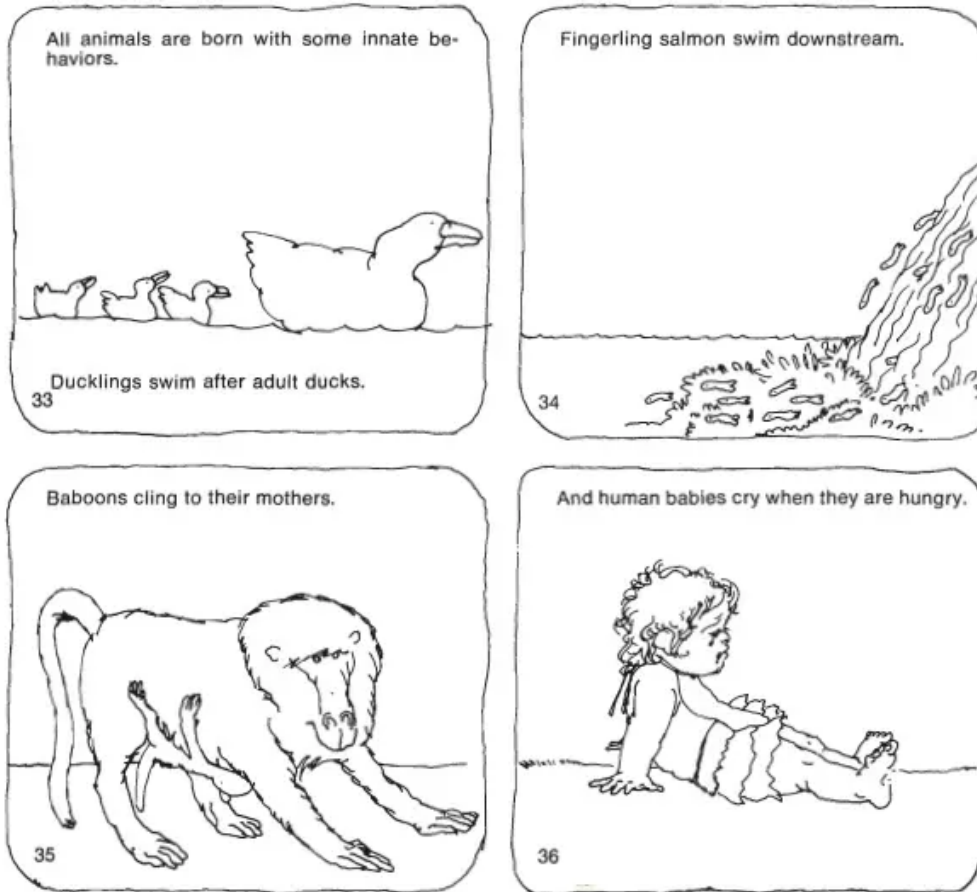
This article is about the place of Indigenous people in an early instance of a culture war in the United States. It involves an experimental social studies curriculum for American students in the fourth through sixth grade, created in the 1960s and early 1970s by a team of distinguished educators, scholars, filmmakers, and artists. Funded by the National Science Foundation, “Man: A Course of Study” (better known by its acronym MACOS) sought to replace traditional social studies education in civics and history with “hard” social sciences like anthropology and behavioral psychology. The MACOS curriculum materials were lavishly produced, consisting of 770 pages of teacher’s guides; dozens of student booklets and films, records, educational games, maps and other wall graphics; and even a “take-apart seal”—all offered at a cost of three thousand dollars for five classrooms.¹ Despite its costliness, by 1972, it reached some 400,000 students in 1,700 classrooms across the United States.² Somewhat to the surprise of its creators, however, MACOS came under intense political scrutiny, first from isolated parents and education critics, then from organized groups, and ultimately from members of the United States Congress, who effectively shut down not only the federal funding for MACOS, but to a great extent, the very viability of curricular reform projects on the national level. Though

this story is familiar to historians of American education, it deserves wider consideration for its centrality to the development of conservative politics and the early history of the culture wars.

Even less discussed is the place of Indigenous people in the MACOS curriculum and the controversy it provoked. At the center of the MACOS curriculum was an ethnographic film series that portrayed the traditional practices and day-to-day life of Netsilik Inuit of what was then called Pelly Bay, Canada (now Kugaaruk, Nunavut).³ Both formally innovative and grounded in colonialist representational traditions, the Netsilik Film Series had a prominent place in the controversy over MACOS, and is an important document in its own right in a tradition of filmmaking by and about Inuit beginning with *Nanook of the North* (dir. Robert Flaherty, 1922)—often cited as the first ethnographic film and even the first feature-length documentary—and culminating in the award-winning media produced by the Inuit company Igloodik Isuma Productions.⁴ As film produced for educational purposes, the Netsilik Film Series represents more than a tradition of innovative uses of media in education; it points as well to a largely unacknowledged legacy of Indigenous pedagogy. The culture war that led to the demise of the MACOS project, then, also resulted in a lost opportunity for Indigenous knowledge and teaching to be incorporated into the formal schooling of American children.

What is Human About Humans? The MACOS Controversy

Funded by the National Science Foundation under its remit to ensure the United States' global supremacy in the sciences and technical fields and conceptualized by academics in the post-war universities that formed a key research component of the military-industrial complex, the MACOS curriculum was in many ways a characteristic product of the Cold War.⁵ The curriculum was big and ambitious in investment, conception, and execution, bringing together the talents of dozens of educators, writers, designers, artists, and filmmakers, and research social scientists—notably the anthropologists Irven DeVore and Asen Balikci. But MACOS's central visionary was the well-known academic psychologist Jerome Bruner. Under his leadership, the curriculum would come to be focused on animal and human behavior, and was grounded in the cutting-edge developmental psychology of the period.⁶



< <https://csalateral.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/1.Innate-and-Learned-Behavior-5-Susan-Hegeman.jpg> >

Figure 1. Page from student booklet, "Innate and Learned Behavior" (Educational Development Center, 1970), <http://www.macosonline.org/booklets/Innate%20and%20Learned%20Behavior.pdf> < <http://www.macosonline.org/booklets/Innate%20and%20Learned%20Behavior.pdf> > .

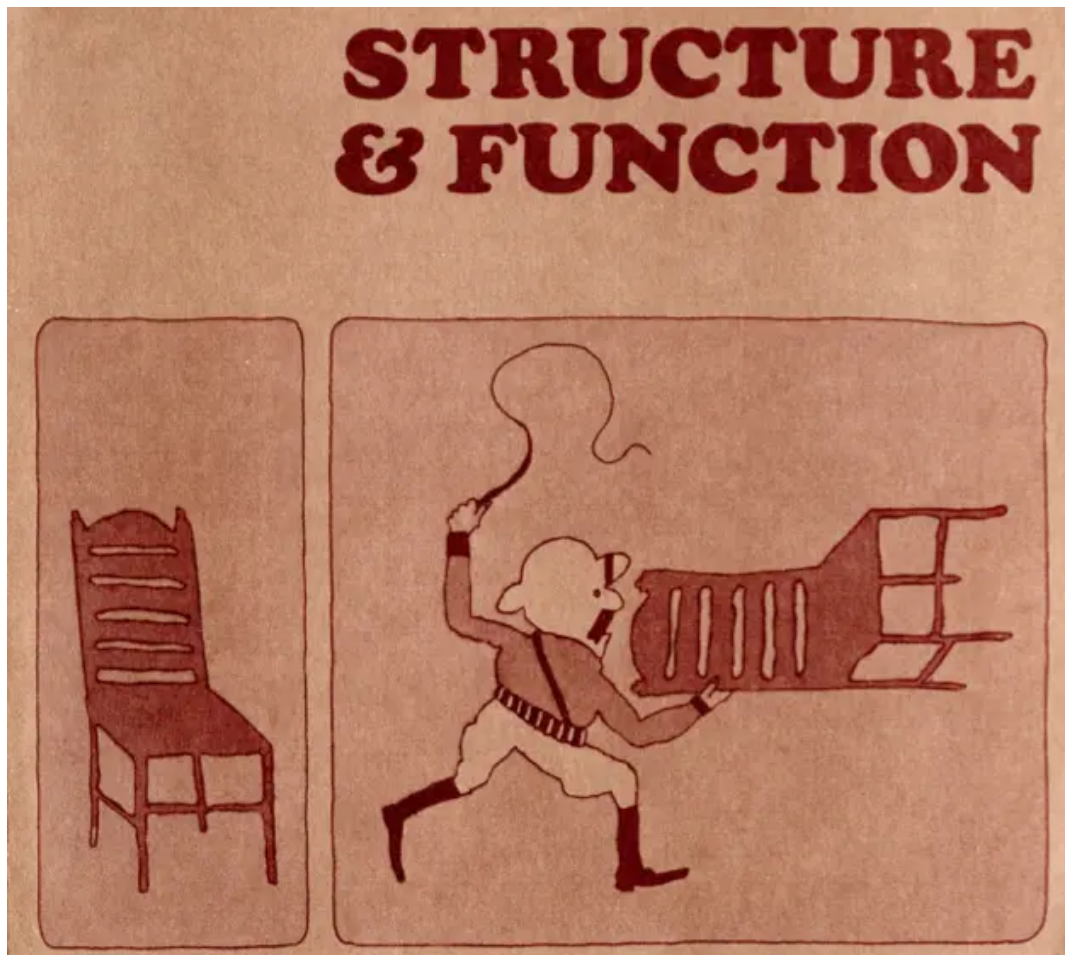
As an educational psychologist, Bruner adhered to a number of principles loosely derived from the progressive educational tradition: that learning should be active rather than passive; that it was important to teach the "structure" of fields of knowledge; and that the process of inquiry—learning how to learn—was more important than the mastery of decontextualized facts. Perhaps more remarkably, and more closely related to both his work in behavioral psychology and his own place within the academic meritocracy, Bruner also held that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any age of development."⁷ He saw no reason, in other words, to keep young children away from traditionally college-level subjects like psychology, ethology, sociology, and anthropology. Indeed, "if one respects the ways of thought of the growing child, if one is courteous enough to translate material into his logical forms and challenging enough to tempt him in advance, then it is possible to introduce him at an early age to the ideas and styles that in later life make an educated man [sic]."⁸ In what Bruner described as a "spiral curriculum," these concepts and modes of thinking could then be revisited in increasingly complex ways as children's cognitive capacities developed.

Following from these premises, MACOS represented a massive departure from the traditional social studies curriculum consisting of history, civics, and geography, long seen as central to the inculcation of the virtues of American citizenship and national pride. By focusing instead on issues germane to the more “scientific” social scientific disciplines, MACOS offered to reform a social studies curriculum that was regarded by many educators as short on “structure” and too focused on learning “atomized” information. In the place of the social mission of instilling nationalism and civic engagement, MACOS framed its value in more internationalist terms, but nevertheless in keeping with American Cold War ideology. The MACOS creators saw their project as giving students the habits of mind conducive to what Fred Turner has described as the anti-totalitarian “democratic personality,” which focused on social comity and cohesion through acceptance of individual differences and cultural diversity. Along the ideological lines of Edward Steichen’s famous 1955 photography exhibition, MACOS would show children that despite whatever our outward differences, we were all part of “The Family of Man.”⁹

The development of the MACOS curriculum shows just how much its participants were driven by this Cold War liberal ethos of unity in cultural diversity. It was originally conceived as a multi-grade curriculum that would follow a loosely developmentalist model of historical and evolutionary stages of human society. Unit 1 would address “A nomadic group” and feature the Netsilik documentary films; Unit 2, devoted to two hunter-gathering societies, would use the Dani of Papua, New Guinea and !Kung people of the Kalahari as examples; and subsequent units would move through the origins of agriculture (Tehuacán Valley, Mexico), urbanism in Mesopotamia, and finally the Bronze Age in Ancient Greece.¹⁰ When Bruner took over the MACOS project, he rejected the six-unit model on pedagogical grounds, as being too information-heavy and insufficiently conceptual. Others (notably DeVore) objected to its implied teleological bias toward Western civilization. His participation pushed the curriculum away from evolutionary models and toward cross-cultural and cross-species comparison.¹¹ Additionally, a number of participants in the MACOS project expressed strong reservations about including the planned ethnographic films of the !Kung and Dani. They felt that without a full classroom airing of issues of American racism and racist stereotypes—which they considered to be impossible in the racially charged climate of the 1970s—films about dark-skinned hunter-gatherers could not be responsibly included.¹²

All of these issues were addressed by shifting the focus of the curriculum further away from history and social evolution and toward human and animal behavioral psychology. Thus, under Bruner’s guidance, the final curriculum began by studying the life cycles of salmon and the social behaviors of herring gulls and baboons, before moving on, in the fourth and final segment of the curriculum to consider humans, of whom the central example were Netsilik Inuit. The Netsilik Film Series, then, had to bear the weight of addressing a potentially huge range of issues related to human difference in the context of a racially charged political moment. And yet at least some of the MACOS collaborators had a great deal of confidence in this material’s efficacy in addressing complex racial and cultural issues. As Balikci, the ethnographer in charge of creating the Netsilik materials, recalled with some vehemence, “We were firmly convinced, that . . . with the Eskimo materials at the center of the program, we would be able to effectively oppose racism and ethnocentrism in America. We really believed it.”¹³

MACOS was organized around a set of very broad, framing questions that emphasized the underlying unity of human beings in the context of cultural and other kinds of diversity: "What is human about human beings? How did they get that way? How can they be made more so?" Broken down a bit more, the framing questions included such issues as the following: How are humans behaviorally different from other animals? What are the commonalities, the "tragic invariances," and biological imperatives with which all humans must grapple, irrespective of culture? How do specific cultures address these imperatives of environment and biology? What is the function of cultural adaptations? How does cultural change happen? How are societies structured? What are the possible futures of humanity?¹⁴



< <https://csalateral.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2.Structure-and-Function-Susan-Hegeman-1.jpg> >

Figure 2. Cover of student booklet, "Structure and Function" (Educational Development Center, 1970), <http://www.macosonline.org/booklets/Structure%20and%20Function.pdf> < <http://www.macosonline.org/booklets/Structure%20and%20Function.pdf> > .

Despite these questions' putative open-endedness, some early critics of MACOS immediately detected the ideological premises behind them. As the educational

philosopher Maxine Greene wryly noted of the MACOS developers, "This sounds like they have the answers."¹⁵ Indeed, it is easy to see in MACOS's framing the disciplinary agendas characteristic of mid-century anthropology, sociology, and behavioral psychology, including structuralism, functionalism, biological determinism, and human and social developmentalism. But further, we might simply note that MACOS's framing questions foreclosed various other approaches to the topic of humanity, not least views about the special or divinely ordained nature of human existence. And by extension, such frames of thinking seemed to subvert the social religion of American nationalism, by which the American nation was understood to have a special, or exceptional identity and destiny among other nations. In its place, MACOS introduced the ideas of historical complexity and even relativism. And as for the question, "How can they [humans] be made more so?" its potential utopianism is rather obviously counterbalanced by suggestions of social engineering. It is here where we may begin to understand some of the sources of the backlash against MACOS.

Outrage over the MACOS curriculum began in 1970 in Lake City, a small Florida town near the Florida-Georgia border. There, a Baptist minister named Don Glenn, who encountered MACOS via his sixth-grade daughter, formed a group to examine the curriculum called Citizens for Moral Education. They soon concluded that MACOS promoted "sex education, evolution, a 'hippie-yippie philosophy,' gun control, and communism."¹⁶ From there, things followed in what now seems like a familiar course: hearings were held at which outraged parents yelled at school board members, who tepidly defended the curriculum, whereupon a bureaucratic decision was made to allow students to opt out of taking the MACOS course if they so wished. Soon after, the curriculum was dropped entirely. But this was not before a significant number of teachers, parents, and students in Lake City actively and even defiantly defended the curriculum. One teacher, who was also a Baptist minister, publicly engaged the Reverend Glenn's accusations that the curriculum was immoral. He and twenty-one of his colleagues also drafted a strongly-worded letter of protest to the school board over the ruling on MACOS on the grounds that it violated their academic freedom.¹⁷ Significantly, some of the teachers supported the MACOS curriculum precisely because they saw it as addressing a pressing local concern. Like many southern communities in 1970, Lake City was under court order to desegregate its schools, and some educators expressed the hope that the MACOS curriculum's emphasis on the commonality of humanity might play some role in easing racial tensions. For them, MACOS was a tool of anti-racist education.

It would be tempting to see the MACOS controversy as simply a proxy war in the larger battle over federally mandated desegregation: a stand-in for what some communities came to see as the wider federal imposition on their local authority over education. Yet even the heated context of school desegregation does not suffice to explain the vehemence of the MACOS controversy, which ultimately extended well beyond the segregated South, animating parent groups in Arizona, Washington State, and New Hampshire. The final straw for MACOS was in April of 1975, when it became an issue in congressional debates over federal appropriations for the National Science Foundation itself. There, Arizona Republican Congressman John B. Conlan, Jr. introduced an amendment that would prohibit the NSF from using funds to promote *any* activities related to curriculum development without congressional oversight. Though the language of the

amendment was deliberately general, in part to avoid accusations of censorship, the explicit aim was to shut down MACOS. Conlan complained that he and his colleagues had been “inundated with outraged complaints nationwide” about MACOS, which he portrayed as an “insidious” attempt by the federal government to institute national educational standards. Linking Bruner to his controversial Harvard colleague, the behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner, Conlan asserted that MACOS’s real goal was to “mold children’s social attitudes and beliefs along lines that set them apart and alienate them from the beliefs and moral values of their parents and local communities.”¹⁸ He then embarked on a decontextualized tour of the MACOS materials to give evidence for his claim that the curriculum promoted behavior such as “adultery and wife-swapping,” cannibalism, female infanticide, “divorce and trial marriage,” murder, senilicide, and “surveillance.”¹⁹ He also complained that the Netsilik films, in particular, “contain many lurid and gory scenes of Eskimos killing and butchering animals they hunt. Children are shown scenes of Eskimos eating the eyeballs and other organs of slaughtered animals, and drinking warm blood.”²⁰

In debate, Democratic Representative James W. Symington of Missouri wondered if it was really such a bad thing for children to be exposed to the realities as the killing and slaughtering of animals for food: “When I was a boy working on my grandfather’s farm, I used to see how they dispatched hogs before the bacon could be made available. Nothing I saw in that film [*At the Caribou Crossing Place*] exceeded the severity of that operation.”²¹ Congressman Richard Ottinger, a Democrat from New York, pointed out that Conlan had cherry-picked his examples of the bad behavior allegedly being modeled in the MACOS curriculum from sources that were clearly identified as fictional or mythological. He wondered facetiously if “Little Red Riding Hood” also promoted bestiality, and expressed concern about the Bible as a proper text for children, given its tales of murder, polygamy, and infanticide.²² Conlan’s amendment was narrowly defeated, largely on the grounds that it would have turned Congress into a de facto curriculum review board, but the damage was done nevertheless. The battle led to a cascade of further legislation and hearings, the ultimate result of which was that the NSF withdrew further funding not only from MACOS but from its long-standing mission of funding curriculum projects in general. Moreover, the public controversy effectively killed any further sales of the MACOS curriculum to school districts, leading to its demise.²³

The dramatic rise and fall of MACOS has been widely discussed among historians of education in terms of “failure”—of the perhaps over-ambitious pedagogical aspirations of the curriculum itself, and of the research academics’ failure to appreciate the multiple constraints on teachers, school boards, and school administrators. Even more commonly, the MACOS episode has been portrayed as a hubristic failure among the curriculum’s creators to properly grasp the complexity of the politics of schooling in the United States, where governance is uneasily dispersed across national, state, local, and even familial levels.²⁴ But more fundamentally, the “failure” of MACOS may be seen as resulting from a deep conflict over education’s role in fulfilling the imperatives of the United States’ Cold War anti-totalitarian politics. The architects of MACOS, denizens of research universities, promoted cultural tolerance and a meritocratic conception of scientifically oriented pursuits and modes of thinking as necessary skills for opposing totalitarianism. Meanwhile, the opponents of MACOS conceived of themselves as engaged in an anti-totalitarian mission, albeit of a more populist kind. Focused on opposing communism, they

emphasized the significance of religious faith, conventional morality, the local authority of family and community, and a nationalist belief in the exceptional destiny of the United States as a beacon of freedom to the world. With this ideological conflict in mind, it may be possible to see MACOS's demise not so much in terms of various failures of vision on the part of its creators than as a victim of what would, by the end of the twentieth century, be known as culture wars.

The MACOS Culture War

Culture wars—currently exemplified by recent conflicts over teaching critical race theory, the removal of monuments celebrating the Confederacy, or the banning of transgender athletes from girls' sports—are now a familiar feature of American politics.²⁵ But the idea of a culture war is not without some controversy, particularly if we return to the moment of the idea's articulation in the decades around the turn of the millennium. Thomas Frank famously described the culture war over abortion as largely a political tactic, deployed by political conservatives to entice the working class to vote against their material self-interests. Others, such as James Davidson Hunter and Andrew Hartman, have portrayed culture wars as more complex *cultural* struggles over ideological, religious, and historical fissures in American society.²⁶ The MACOS example can help us see that in this crucial moment in the history of American conservatism, a culture war could be both: a tactic for building political coalitions *and* a pitched battle over deep divisions over the shape and future of American culture.

Rick Perlstein offers support for the idea that the MACOS culture war was a central event in the development of what would become the Reagan-era conservative coalition of values voters and free-market ideologues. He argues that the controversy over MACOS only became a national phenomenon through the power of an "emerging conservative infrastructure" with roots in Barry Goldwater's failed presidential run in 1964.²⁷ The national public outcry over MACOS that Conlan was able to invoke on the floor of Congress was the direct product of conservative political operative Richard Viguerie's new political direct mailing strategies and the propaganda efforts of the Heritage Foundation, recently founded and funded by beer magnate Joseph Coors to meld an older model of conservative think tanks to outright political activism and advocacy.²⁸ Indeed, it was through morally-tinged social controversies like those over MACOS that the Heritage Foundation found its mission and helped determine the shape of modern American conservatism. That is to say, with the MACOS controversy and others like it, a conservative movement largely dominated by business interests learned how to use social controversies, along with mass marketing, to consolidate its political base.

But any account of this strategy would be incomplete without also explaining the specific appeal of the MACOS controversy as an issue for social conservatives, who were, in fact, undergoing their own kind of political crisis. During the early years of the Cold War, religious and social conservatives were relatively comfortably incorporated into a nationalist political narrative that presented communism as the central threat to both Christianity and an implicitly Christian American way of life. Yet with the Civil Rights Act

and other challenges to local autonomy emanating from the courts and federal government, the increasingly powerful and vocal religious conservatives shifted their focus of animus to the perceived excessive—indeed, totalitarian—power of government itself. This is exemplified in the Reverend Glenn’s associative chain that linked MACOS to sex education, evolution, gun control, communism, and “hippie-yippie philosophy.” On the face of it, these are strange linkages. In no way did MACOS touch on gun control. Nor did it significantly address sex education, except possibly for a unit on “Life Cycles,” which focused as much on salmon as it did on humans.²⁹ Even evolution was treated somewhat circumspectly in the course design—not out of concerns over potential religious controversy but over worries about inadvertently introducing social Darwinist views. However, these ideas had conceptual coherence for Glenn and his fellow religious conservatives who drew a clear connection between the curriculum’s frankly humanist and anti-exceptionalist perspective and a perceived threat to “states’ rights,” American national identity, and patriarchal authority. Put another way, MACOS, sex education, evolution, and gun control—and, of course, federally-mandated desegregation—were all seen as de facto “communist,” in that they implied something like a totalitarian imposition of state control, and thus were arrayed against what was understood to be a fundamentally Christian American way of life.

Soon, and with direct reference to MACOS, a name would coalesce around this perceived totalitarian assault on religiously authorized patriarchal control: “secular humanism.” To this day, almost a half-century after the height of the MACOS controversy, the website of televangelist Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) continues to cite MACOS as a scary example of the federal government’s efforts to “indoctrinate young children into the teachings of humanism.”³⁰ “Secular humanism” would become the conservative justification for white flight into Christian schools in the era of desegregation. It would also be linked to everything from declining test scores and the new math in education, to a vast array of social ills and horrors including crime and suicide, women’s equality, gay rights, reproductive rights, environmentalism, disarmament, wealth redistribution, and “one-world government.”³¹

In sum, the MACOS controversy helped define “secular humanism,” the central domestic opponent of the fundamentalist Christian agenda, in a moment of ideological crisis for the right: when it was hard to oppose massive impositions of federal authority like desegregation without being accused of racism, and when the power of the old ideological opponent of Soviet communism was on the wane and had not yet found its substitute in militant Islam. In this way, the MACOS culture war aided in the political ascendancy of the modern religious right; in particular, the kind of Dominionism promoted by Pat Robertson and others, with its strong emphasis on blind authority, militant nationalism, and violent millennial fantasies.

On Eating Eyeballs and the Politics of Disgust

It is no coincidence that so many culture war controversies involve children and education. Contests over children and their upbringing implicitly address deep anxieties about futurity

and changes in social values, symbols, and ideas.³² Additionally, like a melodrama, a good political controversy needs a perceived imperiled, and innocent, victim. It was perhaps for this reason that Conlan and his supporters argued not only that MACOS taught improper things, but that it physically imperiled children. Specifically, it may be recalled, Conlan claimed that the Netsilik Film Series assaulted children with gory and offensive scenes of hunting, killing, butchering animals, and eating things that many Americans in the 1970s might have found disgusting. This concern is in some ways the opposite of the absurd suggestion that MACOS was promoting or teaching practices like “wife swapping” or cannibalism. While those worries rested on a somewhat magical belief that the mere mention of something in textual form—regardless of context—would provoke imitation in children, the films, on the other hand, were faulted for arousing visceral repulsion: the children, it was alleged, were being forced to experience things that naturally and rightly sickened them. I will take this issue as an opportunity to look more closely at the Netsilik Film Series, since that is the source of this alleged peril, and also to begin to think about why the MACOS material was, at least for some, not simply ideologically dangerous, but needed to be couched in terms of repulsion and disgust.

There are nine films altogether in the Netsilik Film Series, divided, when necessary, into half-hour parts: *At the Caribou Crossing Place*; *At the Spring Sea Ice Camp*; *At the Autumn River Camp*; *At the Winter Sea Ice Camp*; *Building a Kayak*; *Fishing at the Stone Weir*; *Group Hunting on the Spring Ice*; *Jigging for Lake Trout*; and *Stalking Seal on Spring Ice*.³³ Altogether, they follow a Netsilik couple and their small child through a year’s worth of traditional activities, including seal and caribou hunting, ice fishing, making *quajait* (kayaks) and *igluit* (igloos), fixing a stone weir and using it to catch fish, playing traditional games, and preparing and eating traditional foods. A great deal of attention is paid to arctic scenery, weather, and wildlife, and the child’s perspective is especially emphasized as a kind of viewpoint character for the audience. The films deploy no voice-over narrative, no subtitles, no musical soundtrack; the audio consists solely of ambient natural noise and the voices of the actors, who speak and sometimes sing in their native language, Natsilingmiutut. The only extra-diegetic explanatory material is a scrolling intertitle imposed over a shot of a globe that gradually focuses in on Nunavut at the beginning of all the films.

The absence of other explanatory supports in the films such as narration or subtitles was deliberate, and again goes back to MACOS’s pedagogical strategies. Greatly concerned that the films not be viewed passively or uncritically, Bruner wanted to immerse students as closely as possible in the experiential position of the ethnographer; the films were to serve as the source material for course discussions and activities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, he turned to the modernist repertoire of techniques of filmic estrangement. On the advice of the linguist Roman Jakobson, Bruner went so far as to consider imposing on the Netsilik footage the radical editing techniques of Alain Resnais’s 1961 film *L’Année dernière à Marienbad*.³⁴ Though such avant-garde experimentation was soon abandoned in favor of more conventional techniques, the elimination of narration and translation as a strategy for provoking estrangement and active watching became central not only to the film’s pedagogical mission but to its status as a groundbreaking ethnographic and educational film. It anticipates similar strategies used in another well-known Indigenous Arctic film, Isuma Igloodik’s, *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (dir. Zacharias Kunuk 2001). *Atanarjuat* is not

a documentary, and it does use subtitles to translate the dialogue, which is solely in Inuktitut. But like the Netsilik films, it forgoes narrative over-voice and non-diegetic sound, in a similar attempt to disrupt passive watching.

In other ways, however, the Netsilik films are not groundbreaking. In the 2004 documentary film, *Through these Eyes* (dir. Charles Laird), which interviews some of the performers in the Netsilik film series, we learn that at the time of the filming, the Pelly Bay community, as it was then called, was undergoing some rapid and culturally transformative changes. Sidonie Nirlungayak, a performer in the Netsilik film series, reports going fishing with her family in 1967, the year the films were released, and coming back to find the village, and subsequently her life, wholly altered by the presence of newly built wooden houses.³⁵ Yet the films were situated in a precontact ethnographic present. Except for the occasional “anachronisms” there is no indication in the film series that the Netsilik had access to cloth, metal implements, or guns.³⁶ Indeed, every film in the series begins with a contextualizing scrolling intertitle, which establishes this ethnographic present as follows: “Because of their almost inaccessible location the Netsilik, the People of the Seal, were virtually the last of the Eskimo groups to abandon the nomadic life of the arctic hunter. As late as 1923 the Danish explorer, Knud Rasmussen, reported that numerous Netsilik had never seen a white man. In the early 1960s the People of the Seal still remembered vividly the old nomadic ways. Thus a minimum of reconstruction was required to film the traditional life of the Netsilik.”³⁷ At the outset of each film, in other words, the Netsilik material is framed as historically, geographically, and culturally remote from an America undergoing the political upheavals of the late 1960s and 1970s. Netsilik Inuit are confined to an eternal temporality sometime before 1923—that is, to roughly the date of the release of *Nanook of the North*.

And yet, for MACOS's critics at the highest national levels, this invocation of distance was disrupted by a visceral sense of proximity and danger. George Archibald, Conlan's press secretary who spearheaded his boss's crusade against MACOS, asserted that he knew of cases of American children who were physically sickened by scenes such as one of a little boy eating a fish eyeball.³⁸ Interviews with adults who had seen the Netsilik films as children did confirm that some of the more gore-filled representations of hunting and butchering made a big impression on them, though many recalled being more titillated than disturbed.³⁹ But it is particularly hard to fathom that the scene with the fish eyeball in particular created the visceral horror that Conlan and company tried to attach to it. The scene, in Part One of *Fishing at the Stone Weir*, presents a woman gutting freshly caught fish in preparation for drying. As she cuts and cleans the fish, she offers little tidbits of raw meat, including an eyeball, to her small boy. Though the camera doesn't linger on the boy's response to this food, we do get a short glimpse of him appreciatively, almost thoughtfully, chewing.⁴⁰



<https://csalateral.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/3.child-eating-fish-eye-Susan-Hegeman.jpg>

Figure 3. A child eats a raw fish eyeball, *Fishing at the Stone Weir, Part 1*, directed by Quentin Brown (1967; Education Development Center and National Film Board of Canada), loc. 26:43, https://www.nfb.ca/film/fishing_at_stone_weir_pt_1 < https://www.nfb.ca/film/fishing_at_stone_weir_pt_1 > .

This short scene can be effectively compared to one in *Nanook of the North*, in which Nanook (played by Allariallak) and his family visit the trading post. There, Nanook's children are given a treat of lard and sea biscuit to eat. But after one child, Allegoo, develops a stomachache, the trader gives him a big medicinal dose of castor oil. To the likely surprise and amusement of the film's audience—especially its original 1920s audience, who would have immediately recognized castor oil as a medicine widely hated by children—the camera lingers on the happy, smiling child licking castor oil from his lips with obvious relish. The viewer is prompted to find the scene both cute and funny. In *Nanook*, the surprise the audience might register at the Inuk child's tastes is comically redirected into a point of connection in the recognition of his evident pleasure.⁴¹



< <https://csalateral.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/4.Allegoo-drinking-castor-oil-Susan-Hegeman.jpg> >

Figure 4. Nanook's son Allegoo enjoys castor oil, *Nanook of the North*, directed by Robert Flaherty (1922; Pathé), loc. 15:19, <https://vimeo.com/42775802> < <https://vimeo.com/42775802> >).

On the surface, the scene where the boy eats the fish eyeball is very similar: a child readily eats something that may be widely regarded as disgusting by his audience. Yet, in keeping with the filmmaking strategy of the Netsilik series in general, we are not similarly cued to find this scene particularly touching or funny, or particularly disgusting. It neither invites the closeness of identification nor the distance of revulsion. In fact, it comes to seem completely quotidian, especially as it is one of many scenes in the films involving hunting, fishing, and preparing and eating food. It is also similar to other closeups of this and other children engaging with the natural world—as, for example, when a child plays with a butterfly.⁴² Indeed, the teachers' guide encourages teachers to ask students who are disgusted by this scene to explain (and therefore think about) their reaction. It also suggests sharing the story of a French traveler who gradually overcame his initial disgust with Inuit food and eventually embraced it as a delicacy.⁴³ The pedagogical message here seems to be that eating fish eyeballs is within the range of things that people do: nothing more, nothing less, and certainly nothing to be sickened by.

The pedagogical plan, in other words, was entirely in keeping with the MACOS agenda to normalize the activities of the Netsilik as fundamentally within the range of human

behaviors, and ultimately to stress the commonality of humankind. But in the context of the postwar United States, there were some very explicit reasons why this seemingly anodyne pedagogical point could go so politically awry. Interestingly, it was Margaret Mead, the doyenne and public face of anthropology in America, who may have gotten most economically to the pedagogical—and political—issue. Hoping to enlist her in the cause of defending MACOS in congressional hearings, Peter Dow, director of the MACOS project, explained to Mead that the course was being criticized because, among other things, it included a story about an old woman who was abandoned by her family to die. Mead replied, “What do you tell the children that for?” Dow then asked her how she would defend MACOS before Congress. Mead replied quickly and firmly: “You tell them what they want to hear. You point out that the reason we teach about Eskimos is to help children understand the differences between our culture and theirs, that we have choices they don’t have. You tell them that we have the wheat fields of Kansas and the oil fields of Texas, that we are a culture of abundance, not scarcity, and we don’t have to leave our old people behind to die on the ice like the Eskimos—if we choose not to.”⁴⁴ Mead, a canny actor, long used to the limelight and to the complex business of conducting anthropological work at the government’s behest, probably understood political gamesmanship better than the MACOS organizers. But she also may have intuited something about postwar political ideology that had also escaped them: that the liberal notion of the “democratic personality,” which enshrined the value of individual and cultural difference within the social body, was vulnerable to the way that difference could be mobilized as alien, intolerable, disgusting, and un-American. Though the Netsilik community was chosen as an ethnographic example precisely because of its seeming distance from contemporary American social conflicts, this very distance could be used against it, as an example of unassimilable, intolerable alienness. Or at least, that’s what Conlan hoped.

Conlan’s own political career was not markedly helped by his crusade against MACOS. Derided in the national press as a fringe candidate “whose standard speech connects Eskimos to a world socialist plot,” Conlan lost an ugly primary race for Senate to Sam Steiger, a fellow pro-development Republican (Steiger, in turn, lost the general election to Democrat Dennis DeConcini).⁴⁵ But why did Conlan even think that, of all the issues to run on, the MACOS controversy would turn Arizona voters out for him? In a state with a large Native American population and vast reservations that stood outside of state jurisdiction, Conlan was likely betting on both racial animus and on Western sentiments, not unrelated to those of Southern segregationists, that the federal government interfered in local relations between dominant and minority populations. Of course, Conlan would later emphatically dismiss suggestions that his attack on MACOS had anything to do with his own views of Native Americans: “I had a very sympathetic feeling for Indians to try and give them a chance if they would like to come into Western civilization. If they didn’t, that’s their choice. But we found the Netsilik tribe, at least as portrayed in this program, is extremely primitive. Too primitive a society to say this should be an example for our students to follow.”⁴⁶

Here, Conlan clarifies several points about his concerns about both MACOS and the Netsilik series. Centrally, Conlan asserts that the Netsilik were “too primitive” to serve as educational models. While the MACOS creators saw their goal as one of producing a

detached and objective (and tolerant) understanding of human diversity, Conlan and company portrayed MACOS's pedagogical goal as one of trying to make American students identify with, and perhaps even emulate, pre-contact Inuit. Though this suggestion may seem farfetched, it does make sense of his argument that MACOS was alienating children from their culture and the authority of their parents. Conlan also makes clear his preference for Indigenous people to "come into Western civilization," an assimilationist imperative that, while compatible with his own evangelical Christianity, works against the ideology of the Netsilik films. But this comment also takes on special resonance in the light of events in Arizona, and in much of the desert Southwest, at the time that Conlan was in Congress (1973–77). The remote Four Corners region, where Arizona's northeast corner touches Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado, was at the time undergoing rapid industrialization. Ultimately, six power plants—two nuclear and four coal-burning—would be built in the region to serve the energy demands of booming southwestern cities, including Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Phoenix, parts of which were in Conlan's district. The power plants, in turn, were located in this region to take advantage of their proximity to the vast untapped reserves of high-quality coal located in Dziłfjiiin (translated from Navajo as "Black Mountain," this area is also known as Black Mesa). However, the developers of this region were presented with a significant obstacle: Dziłfjiiin was part of the Navajo and Hopi Nations, and was occupied by a few hundred Hopi and many thousands of Diné (Navajo) sheepherders.

The extrication of mineral and water resources from Native American control required a complex act of "legal theft."⁴⁷ Very powerful regional interests including Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater seized upon a decades-old border dispute between the Navajo and Hopi Nations, and worked to resolve the dispute in the Hopi's favor, with the unprecedented requirement that Diné be resettled off what was now designated Hopi land. They then took advantage of political conflicts internal to the Hopi Nation to install a tribal government that favored ceding the land to use by Peabody Coal Company, a subsidiary of the politically powerful Kennecott and Bechtel corporations. Dziłfjiiin (Black Mesa) would become the site of the largest strip-mining operation in the United States and site of the world's first coal-slurry pipeline, a massively water-intensive technology that piped coal directly to the power plants. Despite the significant air- and groundwater pollution from the mines and power plants, and despite the forcible confiscation of their sheep, many Diné defiantly resisted removal.

With the help of corporate public relations, Goldwater and his pro-development allies portrayed the ensuing unrest as a "range war" between the cooperative Hopi and some unruly Diné, fostered by a few outside agitators "pouring kerosene on the old flames of tribal hatred and revenge."⁴⁸ But the fault lines resided less between Diné and Hopi, many of whom had coexisted for decades, than between citizens of both nations and their respective allies, including corporate and industrial interests on the one hand, and environmentalists and pan-Native activists on the other.⁴⁹

Ultimately, the battle over Dziłfjiiin (Black Mesa) would do much to cement a long-term popular association between Indigenous activism and environmentalism.⁵⁰ Among the well-known environmentalists involved in the battle over Dziłfjiiin (Black Mesa) were writers Edward Abbey and Gary Snyder, both of whom in various ways merged their

environmentalism with spirituality derived from Indigenous sources.⁵¹ Abbey's 1975 novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, about a group of anarchist saboteurs on a mission to save the Four Corners region from despoliation—prominent among their targets was the “kraken” of power generation centered at Dziłjiiin (Black Mesa)—is often cited as having offered a model of activism for radical environmentalist groups like Earth First!⁵² Meanwhile, comparing the strip mining of Dziłjiiin (Black Mesa) to a “cancer . . . eating away at the breast of Mother Earth,” Snyder famously envisioned a “new-old” American identity that embraced both Indigenous thought and environmentalism, writing, “Black Mesa speaks to us through an ancient, complex web of myth. She is sacred territory. To hear her voice is to give up the European word ‘America’ and accept the new-old name for the continent, ‘Turtle Island.’”⁵³

This context belies Conlan's comment about some Indigenous people being “too primitive” to serve as role models. He had very real grounds to worry not only about Diné resistance to relocation, but about non-Indigenous others being inspired to support and join their cause. The kind of environmentalist activism and spirituality emerging from the coalition of actors at Dziłjiiin (Black Mesa) directly challenged not only corporate extraction interests, but law and order, Christianity, US sovereignty, and even the identity of “America” itself. Indeed, in this light, it is possible to see Conlan's pedagogical concerns as accurate. Perhaps, as Snyder suggested, there was “a generation of white people finally ready to learn from the [Indigenous] Elders.” Perhaps MACOS, and especially the Netsilik material, was a danger precisely because it would have potential not only to teach children things that Conlan found “disgusting,” but things entirely unimagined even by the architects of the MACOS curriculum themselves.

Arctic Pedagogy

The MACOS conflict has largely been discussed as a battle over education and curriculum in the conventional sense, one whose setting is schools. But as Snyder suggested, education, as a process of transmission from person to person and generation to generation, happens in a variety of settings of which school is only the most formal. Indeed, in the context of the battle over Dziłjiiin (Black Mesa), it is easy to see how political organizing and activism became forms of intercultural education. This is a particularly important point to make in the context of Indigenous people, for whom the history of education is often dominated by the story of forced enculturation into dominant societies through formal schooling. In the United States and Canada, this story is usually told with reference to the residential boarding schools that often brutally separated Indigenous children from their families, communities, languages, and traditions.⁵⁴ But it is obvious that, long before there were boarding schools, Indigenous people taught and learned complex knowledges of the natural world, cosmology, geography, kinship, governance, religious belief, myriad technologies of construction, agriculture, warfare, medicine, and much more, using a variety of pedagogical practices that included storytelling, role playing, and games.⁵⁵ For Inuit, *inunnguiniq*, “the making of a human being,” involves not just the teaching of valuable skills and knowledge, but the transmission from Elders to children of *Inuit Qaujimaqatugangit*, both a worldview and “an ethical framework and

detailed plan for having a good life."⁵⁶ As K. Tsianina Lomawaima powerfully insists, schooling is not the same as education, and there is a difference between education of native people and education *by and for* native people.⁵⁷ For Indigenous people to self-consciously claim education in this fuller sense is to engage in what Daniel Wildcat calls "intellectual sovereignty."⁵⁸

Designed to be used in a school curriculum, the Netsilik Film Series was an educational text in the conventional sense. But I would like to explore another possibility for these films, namely that they be considered from the perspective of informal pedagogy as well, and indeed as participating in an Indigenous educational practice. Though they were not in control of the pedagogical apparatus within which the films were made and used, and therefore not exercising intellectual sovereignty in the fullest sense, we can nevertheless consider Netsilik Inuit who performed in the films as more than ethnographic subjects. We can also see them as *teachers*.

There is, in fact, some precedent for interpreting Inuit actors in this way, by returning once again to *Nanook of the North*. Though it has been rightly criticized as imperialist, manipulative, and romantic in its portrayal of Inuit, *Nanook* is nevertheless remarkable for the degree to which it anticipated more contemporary practices of participatory ethnographic filmmaking. Inuit participants watched and commented upon film rushes, offered up suggestions for what to film, and even undertook some technical tasks. Director Robert Flaherty conceded that unlike other films, which relied on plot and character, the interest of *Nanook* lay in the drama of survival and in the display of his performers' mastery of their environment. In demonstrating his prowess as a hunter or in crafting an igloo, we may also say that Allakariallak, the performer who played Nanook, was also a teacher, whose students included Flaherty and his cameramen, but also quite plausibly other members of his current and future community. Indeed, *Nanook of the North* has been used by Inuit as an archive of information about their cultural practices and as a source of cultural pride.⁵⁹ As such, *Nanook* serves as a kind of necessary precondition for more recent films like the internationally acclaimed *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, produced by an all-Inuit cast and crew, using only Inuktitut language, and developed through a community-based process that incorporated the skills and stories of elders. *Atanarjuat* and other films by the Isuma Igloodik Productions Company represent a clear turn toward filmmaking by and for the Indigenous community itself, an example of what Michelle H. Raheja calls "visual sovereignty."⁶⁰

In this trajectory of Arctic Indigenous filmmaking, from *Nanook* to *Atanarjuat* and beyond, the Netsilik Film Series could seem to be yet another example of a colonialist ethnographic filmmaking practice that diminishes the contemporary presence of Netsilik people, and largely serves the interests of the ethnographers and MACOS curriculum designers. Though the innovative use of sound allows for some open-endedness in interpretation, the effect is still one of treating the actors as objects of study, fixed in the amber of a life lived before contact. But there is another way to think about these films that puts the issue of relative visual sovereignty in a different light. We can reconceptualize all of these works in relation to teaching and see the efforts of Inuit participants as acts of "intellectual sovereignty."

Reflecting on her involvement as an actress in the Netsilik films, Sidonie Nirlungayak recalls having firmly rejected the assertion by the southern filmmakers that they were recording a disappearing way of life. Though she later seems to have reevaluated that idea, at the time of the filming she was clear that “this was how I lived every day. I mean these things were part of our lives, and had been since I was a child.”⁶¹ Another performer, Guy Kakkianiun, reiterates this idea that what he was doing in the Netsilik films was capturing everyday life. He remembers happening upon the filming of *Fishing at the Stone Weir* and joining in on the activity being filmed for the simple reason that he needed fish to feed his dogs: “Even though I was acting in the film, it was the real thing for me.”⁶²

Why would it seem important to them to insist that what they were showing was the “real thing”? One possible answer is revealed in *Fishing at the Stone Weir*, which offers extensive footage of two men spearing fish. Intercut with this footage are scenes of a child using a small spear of his own to catch fish, imitating and learning how to do the work of his elders. Through editing, the filmmakers themselves conveyed the idea that this was a pedagogical scene, in which the observers—the Netsilik child, the filmmakers, and the children who would be watching the film in southern classrooms alike—were learning through the ancient practices of observation and imitation. Indeed, Joe Karetak and Frank Tester confirm that “Inuit children learn by seeing and doing. Their roles and responsibilities—present and future—were defined and visible to them in the daily and seasonal routines of Inuit camp life.”⁶³ In other words, representing the techniques and routines of life was both a demonstration of the mastery of skills and information and an act of transmitting this knowledge to others. Small wonder, then, that on hearing about the MACOS controversy many years later, one of the Netsilik performers, Barthelemy Nirlungayak, expressed both incomprehension and a fairly personal kind of hurt: “What those people down south say never surprises me. They don’t know us. The fact is, that’s just how we lived.”⁶⁴




















< <https://csalateral.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/5.Child-spear-fishing-Susan-Hegeman.jpg> >

Figure 5. Child imitates the fisherman, *Fishing at the Stone Weir, Part 1*, directed by Quentin Brown (1967; Education Development Center and National Film Board of Canada), loc. 26:43, https://www.nfb.ca/film/fishing_at_stone_weir_pt_1 < https://www.nfb.ca/film/fishing_at_stone_weir_pt_1 > .

For the MACOS creators, Netsilik Inuit provided a case study of a common humanity in the context of cultural difference. For its critics, they presented a far more intimate encounter with a threatening alterity. For the Netsilik performers, however, a more generous kind of intimacy may well have been at play—an effort to show and transmit to others the essential skill and knowledge for “having a good life.” Sadly, the real “failure” of the MACOS curriculum may well have been the inability to recognize *this* pedagogy.

Notes

1. Peter Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics: Lessons from the Sputnik Era* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 1999), 134, 169; “Man: A Course of Study” (Washington DC: Curriculum Development Associates, 1971), 1, <http://macosonline.org/guides/MACOS%20brochure.pdf> < <http://macosonline.org/guides/MACOS%20brochure.pdf> > . ↗
2. Rick Perlstein, *Invisible Bridge: The Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014), 449. ↗
3. A note on terminology: “Inuit,” which means “the people” in Inuktitut, refers to the diverse Indigenous Peoples who traditionally inhabit the circumpolar Arctic, of which Netsilik Inuit are but one group. The colonialist term “Eskimo,” which is now increasingly in disuse, is retained only in the context of historical quotations. ↗

4. Founded in 1990, Igloodik Isuma Productions produces films, television, and internet material reflecting Inuit culture and language. They produced the award-winning trilogy of films *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001), *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen* (dir. Norman Cohn and Zacharias Kunuk 2006), and *Before Tomorrow* (dir. Marie-Hélène Cousineau < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie-H%C3%A9l%C3%A8ne_Cousineau> and Madeline Ivalu < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madeline_Ivalu> 2007). Isuma Productions, "About Us." <https://www.isuma.tv/isuma-productions/about> < <https://www.isuma.tv/isuma-productions/about>> . 
5. From its inception in 1950, the National Science Foundation has been actively involved in funding efforts to improve precollegiate science education and teacher training. By the 1960s, when the curricular reform movement was in full force, the NSF's educational reform mission extended to the social sciences as well. National Science Foundation, "Education: Lessons About Learning," <https://www.nsf.gov/about/history/nsf0050/pdf/education.pdf> < <https://www.nsf.gov/about/history/nsf0050/pdf/education.pdf>> ; and see Ronald W. Evans, *The Social Studies Wars: What Should We Teach the Children?* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004), 115–17; and Andrew Hartman, *Education and The Cold War: The Battle for the American School* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). 
6. Erika Lorraine Milam, "Public Science of the Savage Mind: Contesting Cultural Anthropology in the Cold War Classroom," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 49, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 311, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.21608> < <https://doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.21608>> . 
7. Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 33; Bruner, "Learning and Thinking," in *In Search of Pedagogy, Volume 1: The Selected Works of Jerome Bruner* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 24–30; and Evans, *The Social Studies Wars*, 123–24. 
8. Bruner, *The Process of Education*, 52. 
9. Fred Turner, *The Democratic Surround: Multimedia and American Liberalism from World War II to the Psychedelic Sixties* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) 151–212. 
10. Milam, "Public Science of the Savage Mind," 310. 
11. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 66. 
12. Milam, "Public Science of the Savage Mind," 313. 
13. *Through these Eyes*, directed by Charles Laird (2004; National Film Board of Canada. https://www.nfb.ca/film/through_these_eyes < https://www.nfb.ca/film/through_these_eyes> , loc. 4:16. 
14. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 76–78; "Man: A Course of Study," 1. 
15. Quoted in Paul G. Fitchett and William Benedict Russell, "Reflecting on MACOS: Why it Failed and What We Can Learn from its Demise," *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education* 48, no. 3 (June 2012): 474, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2011.554423> < <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2011.554423>> . 
16. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 179. 
17. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 183–84. 
18. *Congressional Record*, 94th Cong., 2nd Session, "Authorizing Appropriations to the National Science Foundation," (9 April 1975): 9496. 
19. *Congressional Record*, 9497. 
20. *Congressional Record*, 9498. 

21. *Congressional Record*, 9501. [↗](#)
22. *Congressional Record*, 9503. Though Ottinger was correct that Conlan and his allies derived some of their criticism of MACOS (and Netsilik culture) from fictional sources, Balikci's ethnography of the Netsilik, a major factual source for the course, does discuss the practice of female infanticide. It also describes sexual and marital customs that could be ethnocentrically characterized as "adultery and wife-swapping;" Asen Balikci, *The Netsilik Eskimo* (Garden City, NY: The Natural History Press, 1970), 147–72. [↗](#)
23. For an account of the legislative events leading up to MACOS's demise, see Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 215–228. [↗](#)
24. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 261–64; and Fitchett and Russell, "Reflecting on MACOS," 469–484. [↗](#)
25. See Jim Jones, "How Critical Race Theory Became Today's Defining Culture War Issue," *The Hill*, June 21, 2021, <https://thehill.com/opinion/civil-rights/559398-how-critical-race-theory-became-todays-defining-culture-war-issue> < <https://thehill.com/opinion/civil-rights/559398-how-critical-race-theory-became-todays-defining-culture-war-issue> >; Robert Costa and David Nakamura, "Trump Embraces Culture War with Call to Preserve Confederate Statues," *Washington Post*, August 17, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-embraces-culture-war-with-call-to-preserve-confederate-statues/2017/08/17/86f57c3c-8368-11e7-ab27-1a21a8e006ab_story.html < https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-embraces-culture-war-with-call-to-preserve-confederate-statues/2017/08/17/86f57c3c-8368-11e7-ab27-1a21a8e006ab_story.html >; and Jeremy Peters, "Why Transgender Girls are Suddenly the G.O.P.'s Culture-War Focus," *New York Times*, March 29, 2021, updated May 3, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/29/us/politics/transgender-girls-sports.html> < <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/29/us/politics/transgender-girls-sports.html> >. [↗](#)
26. Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas?: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004); James Davidson Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1991); and Andrew Hartman, *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015). Hunter, who did much to develop the idea of "culture wars," rebuts some skeptics of the concept and clarifies his reliance on an anthropological conception of culture similar to Pierre Bourdieu's "habitus." "A Response from James Davidson Hunter," in *Is There a Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and American Public Life*, ed. Hunter and Alan Wolfe (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2006) 90–96. [↗](#)
27. Perlstein, *Invisible Bridge*, 451–52. [↗](#)
28. Ronald W. Evans, *The Tragedy of American School Reform* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 123–24, 140. [↗](#)
29. See the MACOS teachers' guide, *Introductory Lessons/Salmon* (Cambridge, MA: Educational Development Center, 1968, 1969), 6, <http://www.macosonline.org/course/guides/Three-Salmon.pdf> < <http://www.macosonline.org/course/guides/Three-Salmon.pdf> >. [↗](#)
30. Pat Robertson, "What Rights Does the State Have over a Christian and His Children?" CBN.com, <https://www1.cbn.com/questions/rights-state-over-christian-children> < <https://www1.cbn.com/questions/rights-state-over-christian-children> >; P. Kerim Friedman, "Eskimos and 'Hippie-Yippee Philosophy': An interview with Asen Balikci," *Savage Minds*, October 28, 2005, <https://savageminds.org/2005/10/28/eskimos-and-hippie-yippee-philosophy-an-interview-with-asen-balikci/> < <https://savageminds.org/2005/10/28/eskimos-and-hippie-yippee-philosophy-an-interview-with-asen-balikci/> >. [↗](#)
31. Susan Rose, "Christian Fundamentalism and Education in the United States," in *Fundamentalisms in Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott

- Appleby (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 459. [↗](#)
32. See Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 197–225. [↗](#)
33. The entire series of films is available for streaming from the National Film Board of Canada, <https://www.nfb.ca> < <https://www.nfb.ca>> . [↗](#)
34. Nancy C. Lutkehaus, "Putting 'Culture' into Cultural Psychology: Anthropology's Role in the Development of Bruner's Cultural Psychology," *Ethos* 36, no. 1 (March 2008): 46–59, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1352.2008.00003.x> < <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1352.2008.00003.x>> . [↗](#)
35. Some of the disruptive impacts of these new housing settlements are described in *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit: What Inuit Have Always Known to Be True*, ed. Joe Karetak, Frank Tester, and Shirley Tagalik (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Books, 2017) loc. 753–765. [↗](#)
36. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 62. [↗](#)
37. See, for example, *Fishing at the Stone Weir: Part 1*, directed by Quentin Brown (1967; Education Development Center and National Film Board of Canada), https://www.nfb.ca/film/fishing_at_stone_weir_pt_1 loc. 00:42. [↗](#)
38. *Through These Eyes*, loc. 30:48. [↗](#)
39. *Through These Eyes*, loc. 30:32. [↗](#)
40. *Fishing at Stone Weir*, loc. 26:43. [↗](#)
41. *Nanook of the North*, directed by Robert Flaherty (1922; Pathé), loc. 14:07–15:22, <https://vimeo.com/42775802>. [↗](#)
42. *Fishing at the Stone Weir: Part 1*, loc. 5:11. [↗](#)
43. *The Netsilik Eskimos at the Inland Camps*, Teacher's Guide (Cambridge, MA: Educational Development Center, 1970), 12, <http://www.macosonline.org/guides/Six-The%20Netsilik%20Eskimos%20at%20the%20Inland%20Camps.pdf> < <http://www.macosonline.org/guides/Six-The%20Netsilik%20Eskimos%20at%20the%20Inland%20Camps.pdf>> . [↗](#)
44. Dow, *Schoolhouse Politics*, 206. [↗](#)
45. Grace Lichtenstein, "Arizona Nearing Senate Decisions." *New York Times*. August 31, 1976. [↗](#)
46. *Through these Eyes*, 37:08. [↗](#)
47. Judith Nies, *Unreal City: Las Vegas, Black Mesa, and the Fate of the West* (New York: Nation Books, 2014), xx, 42, 111–36. [↗](#)
48. Goldwater quoted in Nies, *Unreal City*, 32. [↗](#)
49. William E. Blundell, "Ecological Shootout at Black Mesa," *Wall Street Journal*, April 13, 1971, 16; Ward Churchill, "Genocide in Arizona: The 'Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute in Perspective,'" in *Struggle for the Land: Native North American Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide, and Colonization* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2002), 135–72. [↗](#)
50. Paul C. Rosier, "'Modern America Desperately Needs to Listen': The Emerging Indian in an Age of Environmental Crisis," *Journal of American History* 110, no. 3 (Dec. 2013): 711–35, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jat513>. [↗](#)

51. Bron Taylor, "Resacralizing Earth: Pagan Environmentalism and the Restoration of Turtle Island," in *American Sacred Space*, ed. David Chidester and Edward Tabor Linenthal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 97–125. [↗](#)
 52. Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1975). [↗](#)
 53. Gary Snyder, "'Energy is Eternal Delight,'" in *Turtle Island* (New York: New Directions, 1974) 104–105. [↗](#)
 54. See David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875–1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995). [↗](#)
 55. Vine Deloria, Jr., "Traditional Technology" in Deloria and Daniel Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2001), 57–65. [↗](#)
 56. *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, loc. 320. [↗](#)
 57. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "History without Silos, Ignorance versus Knowledge, Education beyond Schools," *History of Education Quarterly* 54, no. 3 (August 2014): 349–55, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hoeq.12073> < <https://doi.org/10.1111/hoeq.12073> > . [↗](#)
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